

digital

In a Crowded Market
Digital Gives You a Competitive Edge



Digital Helps You Meet the Challenge...

Digital Equipment Corporation has already helped some of the most successful companies in retailing grasp and keep a competitive edge. We've helped them meet not just normal day-to-day operational needs, but also longer-term strategic challenges, too.

The Digital concept of computing was designed right from the start to integrate organizations; we can link together the three vital areas of retailing: the stores, distribution centers, and headquarters.

These links are critical, and your choice of information technology supplier should reflect that.

Rapid Change

In retailing, change has always been a fact of life. But never has change been so rapid.

Today is the era of the consumer. The days of mass marketing are fading. Instead, strategies have to be precisely targeted on specific market sectors.

Difficult economic conditions mean that retailers have to fight that much harder for increased market share. Simultaneously, cost of capital makes high returns essential.

Increased Competition

Despite all the problems, selling space is being added at an ever-increasing rate – considerably higher than demand is increasing. So someone has to lose. Part of that space may be used in unexpected ways: look how supermarkets are widening their ranges; look how service stations are selling everything from groceries to videos. Increasingly, popular shopping malls threaten conventionally positioned stores. Home shopping is still in its infancy, but could become a major alternative to conventional stores once the technology matures.

Information Strategy

Today's successful retailers have very clear ideas about where they gain competitive advantages. They use these ideas as a base for their business strategies, which in turn define their information strategies.

In a changing and highly competitive environment, as you know only too well, being "good enough" is not enough. You must be better than your rivals. Information strategy can be one of the most powerful tools available for maximizing your competitive advantages. Information technology is the means by which you can realize those aims.

Your three critical areas are your branch stores, the distribution network, and finally, headquarters. All have their own special information handling needs, but they require interconnections for you to gain maximum competitive advantage.

Stores

Increasingly, electronic point-of-sale (EPOS) terminals are being used. To get their full benefit, these need to provide local management information and also pass their data to distribution and headquarters systems.

Large stores will need their own accounts, customer records, personnel files, stock management, messaging facilities to headquarters and distribution management, and all the other facilities to run a business successfully.

Distribution Centers

Conventional stock control systems are fine, as far as they go. However, these days, distribution management systems can be much more comprehensive. They are providing facilities such as the most economic routes for delivery trucks to follow from branch to branch, or regulating deliveries into the warehouses from various suppliers, which also implies computer links to suppliers.

Headquarters

The routine functions such as payroll and accounting must continue, but your information strategy will demand much more. The central computer files need to become much more accessible so that information can be used in day-to-day decision making, including consumer targeting, buying, merchandising, store location planning and property portfolio management. Direct links to suppliers using Electronic Data Information (EDI) technology can also speed up the flow of goods to your stores while helping to cut inventories.



Communications

The foundation of an integrated retail strategy is data communications. You need the ability to move your information, quickly and reliably, from where it is generated to where it is used. Digital has been doing just that for over thirty years.

Digital's Special Technology Gives You a Special Advantage

Digital's technology offers particular advantages to retailers. Our technology was designed from the start to be especially good at communications. Which means that our computers are good at "talking" both to each other and to systems from other suppliers, binding them together into one system. In fact we've installed far more of these computer networks than any other company in the world.

Our VAX range of computers starts at personal desktop systems, and goes right up to large mainframe equivalents. Yet exactly the same programs can run on any VAX system, large or small. So you could, for example, use MicroVAXes as in-store controllers for EPOS systems; a mid-range VAX to control automated warehouse systems; and a large VAX at headquarters connecting to any existing mainframe computer. Should business outgrow any of these systems, no problem, just add another VAX and "cluster" it to the original system. The result, two computers performing as one, plus considerable people, cash and time savings.

In-store Computing

You will find Digital's in-store computing technology in toy stores, discount stores, furniture shops, department stores and supermarkets, acting as the communications gateway, doing direct store delivery, staff scheduling, and a variety of other jobs. Digital systems have been linked to EPOS terminals from most major suppliers. In fact we have yet to find an EPOS device we cannot link to!

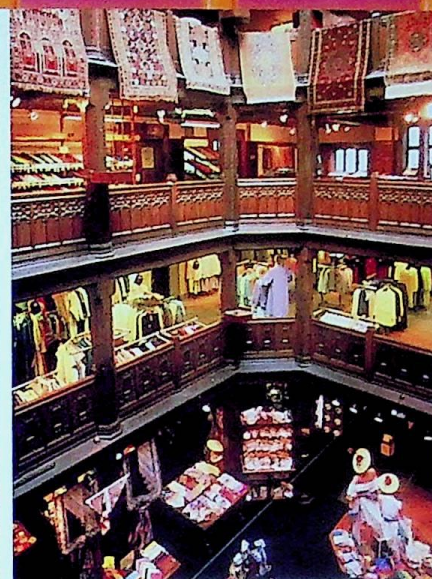
Distribution Systems

Digital systems are running everything from small local depots to the most complex, fully automated warehouses.

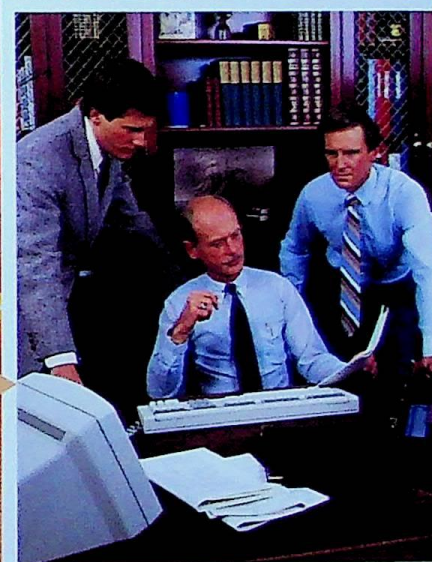
Many customers have chosen one of the numerous software packages that have been developed for Digital, others have written tailor-made solutions, while still others have combined both by enhancing an existing software solution to match their own particular needs.

Headquarters

Digital-based business administration and financial control systems are installed in retail companies worldwide. In addition to these general business applications there are specialized strategic solutions for retailers. These include: consumer targeting, based on the national census and other demographic data; systems for merchandise modeling; and advanced systems for store layout using computer aided design (CAD) techniques. Thanks to Digital's communications skills all these systems can be interlinked to exchange information in ways that make them appear to you as one single, integrated system.

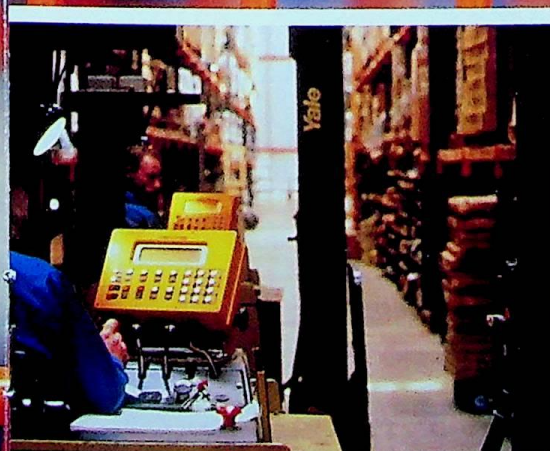


In-store
Computing



Headquarters

Communications



Distribution
Systems

How Digital Turns Your Strategy into a Competitive Edge Technology
Digital computers span the range from small in-store MicroVAXes, mid-range VAXes for distribution, to large VAXclusters for mainframe applications. Yet, they all work the same way, so you can choose the right size of computer for today's application, confident that as your business grows larger, VAXes can be added without costly or time consuming conversion.

Applications

When you choose Digital, you get not just our expertise, but also that of many independent systems and software houses. Because of the VAX's versatility and technical excellence, many of these software houses have chosen both to develop and write their programs on VAX systems. The rare blend of in-depth knowledge of retailing, plus our specialization in computer communications, is an unbeatable combination.

Expertise

Our own people can provide you with guidance on both strategy and applications. Their detailed knowledge on the various application packages will help you get the best possible system solution for your company.

Service

When you buy from Digital, you're backed by one of the largest service and support organizations in the world. Digital's service expertise means more up-time for your networked information system. From the store to the distribution center to headquarters. Digital can provide a complete, integrated retail system to meet your organization's specific needs.

Find Out What Digital has in Store for You.

For more information about Digital's full range of VAX family computers and other ways Digital can make your information strategy more productive, call your Digital representative today.

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